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ABSTRACT

Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) surveyed its 1999-2000 graduates in the winter of 2001 to determine how satisfied they were with their PVCC experience, what jobs they had obtained, which schools they were attending, how much they earned, and what impact PVCC had upon their careers and education. Of the 277 graduates contacted, 133 returned completed surveys (response rate 48%). Results indicated that: (1) 98% were satisfied with the quality of services provided by PVCC; (2) 98% of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of their academic program; (3) 34% were enrolled in a postsecondary institution at the time of the survey; (4) enrolled respondents earned a mean grade point average of 3.5 at their respective colleges; (5) more than nine out of 10 respondents (94%) felt that the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC was either excellent or good; (6) 90% indicated that the credits they earned at PVCC transferred easily to the four-year institution; (7) 76% were employed at the time of the survey, two-thirds of whom worked full time; and (8) the average annual salary earned by employed respondents was $16,795-on average, respondents estimated that their salaries would have been $7,394 lower if they had not attended PVCC. Appended are the survey instrument and graduate comments. (EMH)

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Follow-Up Survey of PVCC Graduates of the Class of 1999-2000

Research Report No. 7-2001
September 2001

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Charlottesville, Virginia

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Follow-Up Survey of PVCC Graduates Of the Class of 1999-2000

Research Report No. 7-2001
September 2001

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Introduction

Since 1974, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) has conducted annual surveys of its graduates. Questions are asked concerning jobs, career satisfaction, salaries, study at other colleges and universities, and the impact PVCC has had upon the careers and further education of its graduates. Information from the survey is used to improve academic programs and college services.

This study reports the results of the 26th graduate survey, conducted for graduates of the class of 1999-2000. The class of 1999-2000 includes those students graduating from PVCC during Summer Term 1999, Fall Semester 1999, and Spring Semester 2000. The survey instrument was the same used for previous classes and is included in this study as Appendix A. At the end of the survey, graduates were invited to offer comments or suggestions concerning any aspect of their PVCC experience. Graduates were particularly asked to comment on the ways that the college could improve its curriculum and services. These comments are contained in Appendix B.

Methodology

During the winter of 2001, the Office of Institutional Research mailed surveys and cover letters to 277 graduates of the class of 1999-2000. Surveys were mailed approximately eight months after graduation to allow time for graduates to secure a job, or to enroll in a college or university. Those not responding to the initial mailing of the follow-up survey were contacted two additional times.

Of the 277 graduates, 133 returned completed surveys for a response rate of 48.0%. This figure is consistent with the response rate from the previous years (1994-

95, 41.1%; 1995-96, 41.0%; 1996-97, 31.2%; 1997-98, 45.2%; 1998-99, 56.7%).

Demographic Characteristics

An important aspect of graduate surveys is to identify demographic characteristics of survey respondents. The primary use of such data is to determine whether the respondents are representative of the overall graduate population, so the results from the respondents can be generalized to the whole graduate population. Toward that end, several categories of demographic information are presented, including sex, race, and age of survey respondents.

In terms of sex, survey respondents were representative of the graduating class of 1999-2000. As can be seen in Table 1, over 65% of survey respondents were female. This percentage is similar to the percentages of females in the total graduate population, where 61.8% of the graduates were female.

Table 1: Sex of Survey Respondents

Sex	Respondents	Percent	Graduates	Percent
Male	46	34.6%	107	38.2%
Female	87	35.4%	173	61.8%
Total	133	100%	280	100%

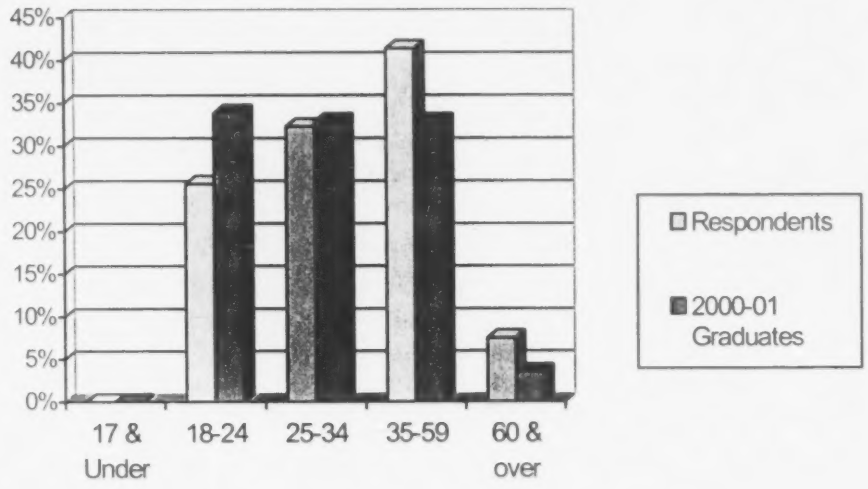
Table 2 compares the race of survey respondents to that of students in the overall graduate population. The percentage of White survey respondents (82.0%) was similar to the percentage of White students in the overall graduate population (84.6%). The percentage of African American respondents (15.0%) also was consistent with the percentage of African American students in the overall graduate population (11.4%). This consistency was also true with the American Indian respondents (0%),

Table 2: Race of Survey Respondents

Race	Respondents	Percent	Graduates	Percent
White	109	82.0%	237	84.6%
African American	20	15.0%	32	11.4%
Am. Indian	0	0%	0	0%
Asian	3	2.3%	7	2.5%
Hispanic	0	0%	1	0.4%
Other	1	.8%	3	1.1%

Asian American respondents (2.3%), Hispanic respondents (0%), and other-race respondents (0.8%).

Figure 1: Age of Survey Respondents and 1999-2000 Graduates



In terms of graduate age, survey respondents tended to be similar to the 1999-2000 graduates. As can be seen in Figure 1, the age distribution of the respondents was consistent with the age trends of the graduating class. These similarities lead to the conclusion that in terms of age, race and sex, the respondent sample is representative of the overall graduate population.

Graduate Satisfaction

One of the primary aims of graduate surveys is to determine whether former students were satisfied with their PVCC experience. Toward that end, the questions contained in Section One of the survey were designed to address four main aspects of the collegiate experiences of PVCC graduates: college services provided by PVCC, academic programs, PVCC's contribution to skill development, and financing a PVCC education.

College Services

Graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction level with nine aspects of college services provided by PVCC. The responses to this question are in shown in Table 3. A majority of 1999-00 graduates reported being satisfied with the college services provided by PVCC.

Every category but one received higher than 80% satisfaction rating from respondents. Several categories received higher than 90% satisfaction ratings; Registration Services (96.9%), Library Services (95.9%), Computing Lab (95.6%), and the Learning Center (91.2%). Student Activities were rated as satisfying by over 75% of respondents. When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the college services provided by PVCC, over 98% of 1999-00 survey respondents indicated satisfaction.

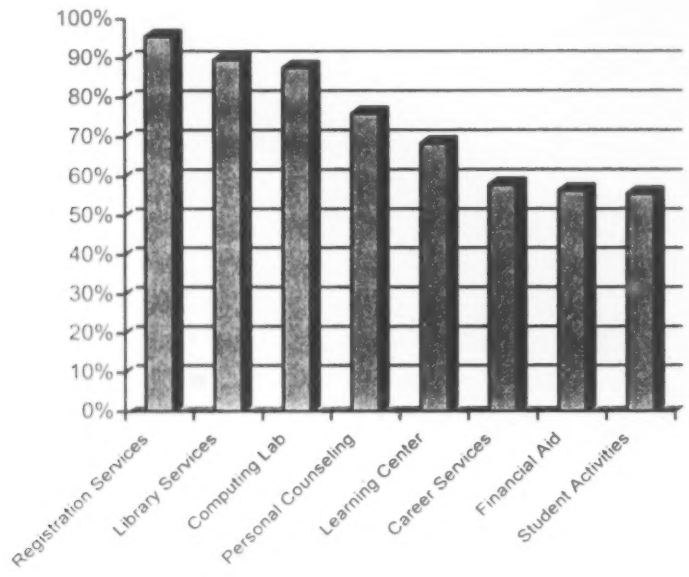
Table 3: Graduate Satisfaction with College Services

Service	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Career Services	83.1%	16.9%
Computing Lab	95.6%	4.4%
Financial Aid	89.3%	10.7%
Learning Center	91.2%	8.8%
Library Services	95.9%	4.1%
Personal Counseling	86.1%	13.9%
Registration Services	96.9%	3.1%
Student Activities	77.0%	23.0%
College Services Overall	98.4%	1.6%

In addition to assessing satisfaction with college services, the data obtained in the college services portion of the survey can be used to determine the level of service usage. This is accomplished by reviewing the number of "Not Applicable" survey responses. Figure 2 shows the percent of respondents who rated each category, or the percent that utilized each service. Based on the number of respondents who rated each service, it can be seen that more than 70% of respondents used the Registration Services, Library

Services, Computing Lab, and Personal Counseling. Fewer students used Career Services, Financial Aid, the Learning Center or Student Activities, but the percent of utilization is still higher than 50% in each category.

Figure 2: Percent of Student Utilization



Academic Programs

In addition to college services, the survey was designed to determine whether graduates were satisfied with various aspects of their academic programs. Students were asked to rate their satisfaction level in seven areas of PVCC's academic program. Table 4 shows the responses to these questions.

In every aspect but one, more than 95% of respondents said they were satisfied with their academic program. Students were exceptionally satisfied with the Grading (98.5%), Instruction (97.7%), Course Availability (95.5%), and Course Materials (95.4%). Academic Advising received a slightly lower satisfaction rating, 83.8%. When asked about the faculty in their academic programs, respondents reported being

exceptionally satisfied. Over 98% of the 1999-2000 graduate survey respondents reported being satisfied with faculty (98.4%), as well as with their relationship with faculty outside of the classroom (98.2%).

Table 4: Graduate Satisfaction with Academic Programs

Aspect	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Academic Advising	83.8%	46.2%
Course Availability	95.5%	4.5%
Course Materials	95.4%	4.6%
Faculty	98.4%	1.6%
Grading	98.5%	1.5%
Instruction	97.7%	2.3%
Relationship with Faculty outside of Class	98.2%	1.8%
Academic Program Overall	98.4%	1.6%

Overall, graduates reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of their academic programs at PVCC. When asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of their academic program overall, over 98% of respondents were satisfied. Only two graduates (1.6%) indicated that they were dissatisfied with their program at PVCC.

Skill Development

Graduates were also asked to rate the extent that their PVCC education developed particular skills. Responses to this question are shown in Table 5. The majority of respondents were pleased with the skills they developed while attending PVCC. As can be seen in Table 5, nine out of ten survey respondents indicated that their PVCC education had contributed to their ability to solve problems (91.5%). More than eight out of ten indicated that the college had contributed to their ability to reason logically (87.5%), research a topic (85.8%), understand and use computers (84.1%), speak clearly and effectively (82.0%), and write clearly and effectively (81.3%). Finally, over 75%

Table 5: Development of Skills while at PVCC

Skill	Contributed	Did not Contribute
Reason Logically	87.5%	12.5%
Research a Topic	85.8%	14.2%
Solve Problems	91.5%	8.5%
Speak Clearly and Effectively	82.0%	18.0%
Understand and Use Computers	84.1%	15.9%
Understand and Use Math	79.2%	20.8%
Write Clearly and Effectively	81.3%	18.8%

felt that attending PVCC had contributed to their ability to understand and use math (79.2%).

In addition to developing skills, many graduates believed that their PVCC experience helped prepare them to become responsible citizens. More than three-fourths of survey respondents (71.9%) indicated that their PVCC education had prepared them for responsible citizenship.

Financing a PVCC Education

Another aim of the graduate survey is to learn about how PVCC students financed their education. Over 80% of respondents were employed while attending PVCC (84.2%). Many who worked while attending PVCC were employed in full-time jobs. In fact, over half of all employed respondents (56.3%) indicated that they worked more than 30 hours per week.

Relatively few graduates borrowed money to finance their PVCC education. Fewer than two out of ten survey respondents (14.3%) indicated that they borrowed money to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses while attending PVCC. Of the students who did borrow money, 50% borrowed only between $1,000 and $2,000, and less than 15% borrowed over $5,000.

Further Education

Another important aspect of graduate surveys is to determine how well former PVCC students perform at the institutions to which they transfer. Approximately one-third (33.8%) of the 1999-2000 survey respondents chose to continue their education at transfer institutions. Over half of those continuing their education were attending college full-time (54.7%). Of those who were not enrolled, about four out of ten (38.2%) indicated that they had plans to enroll during the coming year.

Most 1999-2000 graduates chose to continue their education at public, four-year colleges located within the Commonwealth of Virginia. In fact, 75% of all enrolled respondents chose to continue their education at the University of Virginia (47.6%), Old Dominion University (11.9%), James Madison University (9.5%), or Mary Baldwin (7.1%).

One of the principal aims of graduate surveys is to determine the educational goals of PVCC transfer students. Of the students continuing their education, 25 % indicated that their purpose in attending college is to obtain a bachelor's degree. Among respondents not seeking a bachelor's degree, personal interest, and professional development were listed as the primary purposes for attending college.

Graduates of the Class of 1999-2000 chose to pursue a wide range of fields of study at the four-year institutions to which they transferred. The most popular majors were Business (25%), Psychology (14.3%), Computer Science (10.7%), Anthropology (10.7%), Humanities (10.7%), and Spanish (7.1%). Other majors included Education, English, Government, Health Sciences, Human Services, and Music.

Academically, 1999-2000 graduates performed quite well at the institutions to which they transferred. The lowest grade point average (GPA) reported was 3.00, and the highest 4.0. The average GPA earned by 1999-2000 graduates at transfer institutions was 3.46.

For the most part, 1999-2000 graduates were pleased with the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC. Over 90% of respondents (91.9%) indicated that their degree program at PVCC prepared them either very much or somewhat for their bachelor's program. Over half of survey respondents (52.9%) felt that they were better prepared academically than students who enrolled at their new schools as freshmen. The remaining 47% felt that they were equal to their peers in terms of preparation. No

respondents felt that they were not as well prepared. Finally, more than nine out of ten respondents (94.3%) rated the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC as either excellent or good. Only one student (0.8%) felt that the level of academic preparation received at PVCC was poor.

In addition to questions concerning academic preparation, graduates were asked to compare the academic environment they experienced at PVCC with the learning environment at their transfer institution. Specifically, former students were asked to rate the level of student competitiveness, faculty friendliness, individual attention shown to students, quality of instruction, and strictness of grading practices at PVCC relative to those same aspects at the colleges and universities to which they transferred. The results to these questions are shown in Table 6.

Overall, PVCC compared very favorably with transfer schools. As can be seen in Table 6, more than 9 out of 10 survey respondents indicated that the degree of individual attention shown to students (100%), faculty friendliness (97.5%), and the quality of instruction (92.3%) received at PVCC equaled or exceeded those attributes at the four-year institutions to which they transferred. More than seven out of ten respondents believed that the strictness of grading practices (76.9 %) at PVCC equaled or exceeded those of their four-year institutions. Survey respondents were less enthusiastic about the degree of student competitiveness. Only about six out of ten respondents (61.5%) felt that the degree of student competitiveness at PVCC was comparable to their

Table 6: Comparison of PVCC and Transfer Institutions

	PVCC has More	About the Same	PVCC has Less
Degree of Student Competitiveness	7.7%	53.8%	38.5%
Friendliness of Faculty and Staff	59.0%	38.5%	2.6%
Individual Attention Shown to Students	53.8%	46.2%	0%
Quality of Instruction	30.8%	61.5%	7.7%
Strictness of Grading Practices	5.1%	71.8%	%%

transfer institutions.

In addition to assessing academic preparation, graduate surveys seek to gauge graduate satisfaction with the transfer process. For the most part, 1999-2000 graduates were pleased with the transfer process. Nearly nine out of ten enrolled respondents (89.5%) indicated that the credits they earned at PVCC transferred as expected, and that the college to which they transferred was their first choice (94.6%). Finally, more than nine out of ten respondents (93.9%) who transferred to public four-year colleges in Virginia were satisfied with the transfer process.

Many 1999-2000 graduates took advantage of the transfer services offered by PVCC. Over 60% of all enrolled respondents (62.2%) received assistance from PVCC in transferring to their current college. Students rated the quality of this assistance; the results are shown in Table 7. Most of those who received assistance were pleased with the quality of that support. Eight out of ten respondents rated the quality of assistance they received from academic advisors as excellent or good. Respondents were even more pleased with the quality of assistance from their academic programs and faculty, rating 95.2% and 100% as either excellent or good respectively.

Table 7: Quality of Assistance in Transfer Process

	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor
Quality of Assistance from Academic Advising	80.0%	20.0%
Quality of Assistance from Academic Programs	95.2%	4.8%
Quality of Assistance from Faculty	100.0%	0%

Employment

An important indicator of how well PVCC prepares its students is how well graduates

Table 8: Employment Status

Employed Full-Time in a Related Field	46.2%
Employed Full-Time in an Unrelated Field	13.9%
Employed Part-Time in a Related Field	6.9%
Employed Part-Time in an Unrelated Field	9.2%
Unemployed and Seeking Employment	7.7%
Unemployed and Not Seeking Employment	16.1%

perform in the workplace. Many 1999-2000 graduates obtained gainful employment upon leaving PVCC. As can be seen in Table 8 over three-quarters of survey respondents (76.2%) were employed at the time of the survey. Almost 80% of all employed respondents (78.8%) worked full-time. Of those who were unemployed at the time of the survey, approximately two-thirds (67.7%) were not seeking employment.

Table 9: Occupational Group

Group	No.	Pct.
Administrative Support	16	17.6%
Agriculture	0	0%
Executive / Manager	14	15.4%
Marketing / Sales	8	8.8%
Operators / Laborers	2	2.2%
Professional Specialty Workers	35	38.5%
Service Workers	10	11.0%
Technicians	5	5.5%

PVCC graduates of the Class of 1999-2000 are employed in a wide range of occupations. Graduates were asked to select one of nine occupational groups (using a Virginia Employment Commission classification scheme) that best described the work they do. The results of this are shown in Table 9. For the most part, graduates were employed in occupations that were related to their fields of study at PVCC. Over 70% of employed respondents reported that their PVCC education is related to their current occupation.

One way of assessing the impact of a PVCC education is to ask graduates whether their PVCC education provided them with the tools they need to be effective in the workplace. Almost eight out of ten survey respondents (79.4%) felt that the skills acquired in their PVCC degree programs enhanced either very much or somewhat their workplace performance.

Another way of gauging the impact of a PVCC education with respect to career preparation is to determine whether PVCC graduates are better prepared academically than other employees in the same career field. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (97.7%) felt that they were either better prepared, or about as well prepared,

as other employees beginning careers in their job field. Only two respondents (2.2%) felt that they were not as well prepared as other employees in the same career field.

Finally, graduates were asked to rate the quality of academic preparation they received at PVCC. For the most part, graduates were pleased with the level of academic preparation provided by PVCC. Over 80% of respondents rated the academic preparation as either excellent or good (86.5%).

Job satisfaction among 1999-2000 graduates was quite high. Of the 87 graduates who responded to this question, 89.7% responded that they were satisfied with their current job. In addition, over half of the respondents indicated that they intend to pursue their job as a long-term career.

Attending PVCC had a positive impact on the job prospects of many 1999-2000 graduates. Almost three-fourths of all employed survey respondents (71.1%) obtained their current jobs either while attending, or after attending, PVCC. Forty-two percent of all employed respondents felt that their degree helped them to obtain their present job and over 20% felt that their PVCC degree helped them obtain a promotion in their current job (23.5%).

As previously discussed, many 1999-2000 graduates relied on assistance from faculty, advisors, or academic program staff in transferring to a four-year institution. A similar reliance was not evident with respect to career placement services. In fact, survey results indicate that relatively few 1999-2000 graduates received assistance from PVCC in obtaining jobs. Only one employed respondent (1.1%) indicated that he or she received assistance from PVCC in securing employment.

Many 1999-2000 graduates believed that attending PVCC had a positive impact on earnings. Graduate Salaries ranged from $5,000 to $140,000 with the average annual salary earned by employed survey respondents being $16,795.34. On average, graduates

estimated that their salaries would have been $7,394 lower if they had not attended PVCC.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Follow-up Survey of Graduates for the Class of 1999-00

Instructions: Please check the appropriate box(es) for each question and answer all questions that apply to you. This information will be treated as strictly confidential with answers being combined for group analysis.

Graduate: *[Graduate Name]* Student ID: *[Graduate SSN]*

Section I: PVCC Experience

1. To what extent were you satisfied with each of the following college services provided by PVCC?

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Not applicable
Career services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computing Lab	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning Center	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Library services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Registration services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of college services provided by PVCC?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

3. To what extent were you satisfied with each of the following aspects of your academic program?

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Academic advising	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course availability	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course materials	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grading	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instruction	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning environment	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. To what extent were you satisfied with your relationship with faculty outside of class?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

5. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of your academic program at PVCC?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

6. To what extent did your PVCC education contribute to your ability to:

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Reason logically	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research a topic	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speak clearly & effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand & use computers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand & use math	☐	☐	☐	☐
Write clearly & effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. To what extent did your PVCC education prepare you for responsible citizenship (e.g., make you better informed about your commu
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

(Continued on back)

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8. Were you employed while attending PVCC? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. If yes, how many hours per week on average did you work? ☐ 1 to 10 hours ☐ 31 to 40 hours
☐ 11 to 20 hours ☐ 41 to 50 hours
☐ 21 to 30 hours ☐ Over 50 hours

10. Did you borrow money to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses while attending PVCC?
☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If yes, how much did you borrow? ☐ $ 1 - $1,000 ☐ $3,001 - $4,000
☐ $1,001 - $2,000 ☐ $4,001 - $5,000
☐ $2,001 - $3,000 ☐ Over $5,000

Section II: Further Education

1. Are you currently enrolled in college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If not, do you have plans to enroll during the coming year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If not currently enrolled in college, skip to Section III: Employment)*

3. Are you attending college full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time

4. What type of college are you attending? ***(Please check one from each column)****
☐ 2-year ☐ Public ☐ In-state
☐ 4-year ☐ Private ☐ Out-of-state
☐ Other _____
(Please list)

5. What college are you attending? _____

6. Are you currently pursuing a bachelor's degree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. If not, what is your primary purpose for attending college? ☐ Personal interest
☐ Professional development
☐ Pursue a graduate degree
☐ Satisfy a work requirement
☐ Other _____
(Please list)

(If not currently pursuing a bachelor's degree, skip to Section III: Employment)*

8. What is your major field of study? _____

9. How many credit hours have you earned at your new college? _____

10. What is your current grade point average (on a 4.0 scale)? _____

11. To what extent is your bachelor's degree related to your PVCC degree program?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

12. To what extent did your PVCC degree program prepare you academically for the bachelor's program?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

13. Compared to students who started at your new school as freshmen, do you feel:
☐ Better prepared ☐ About as well prepared ☐ Less well prepared

14. In relation to your current studies, how would you rate the level of academic preparation you received at PVCC?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

15. For each of the following aspects of college environment, please indicate whether PVCC has more, less, or about the same of a given aspect as your current college.

	PVCC has more	About the same	PVCC has less
Degree of student competitiveness	☐	☐	☐
Friendliness of faculty and staff	☐	☐	☐
Individual attention shown to students	☐	☐	☐
Quality of instruction	☐	☐	☐
Strictness of grading practices	☐	☐	☐

16. Did the credits you earned at PVCC transfer as you expected they would? ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. How many credits, if any, were not accepted by your current college? _____

18. Which courses were not accepted? _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

19. Was the college to which you transferred your: ☐ First choice ☐ Third choice
☐ Second choice ☐ None of the above

20. If you transferred to a public 4-year college in Virginia, how satisfied were you with the transfer process?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

21. Did you receive assistance from PVCC in transferring to your current college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. If yes, please rate the quality of assistance you received from each of the following sources:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
Academic advising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Academic program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section III: Employment

1. Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If not, are you seeking employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If not currently employed, please skip to Section IV: Comments & Suggestions)*

3. Are you employed full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time

4. On average, how many hours per week do you work? ☐ 1 to 10 hours ☐ 31 to 40 hours
☐ 11 to 20 hours ☐ 41 to 50 hours
☐ 21 to 30 hours ☐ Over 50 hours

5. What is your current occupation? _____

6. Which of the following occupational groups best describes the type of work you do?

☐ Administrative support ☐ Marketing/Sales ☐ Professional specialty workers
☐ Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing ☐ Operators/Fabricators/Laborers ☐ Service workers
☐ Executive/Administrator/Manager ☐ Precision/Production/Craft/Repair ☐ Technicians

7. To what extent is your PVCC degree program related to your current occupation?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

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8. To what extent do skills acquired in your PVCC degree program help you perform in the workplace?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

9. Compared to other employees beginning their careers in your job field, do you feel:
☐ Better prepared ☐ About as well prepared ☐ Less well prepared

10. In relation to your present job, how would you rate the level of academic preparation you received at PVCC?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

11. Who is your employer? _____

12. May we contact your employer to conduct an employer follow-up survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If yes, please remember to complete, sign, and return the enclosed Contact Authorization Form)*

13. What is your exact job title? _____

14. Would you say that your job is:
☐ Very Satisfying ☐ Satisfying ☐ Not very satisfying ☐ Unsatisfying

15. Do you intend to pursue your current job as a long-term career? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. When did you obtain your current job?
☐ Before attending PVCC ☐ While attending PVCC ☐ After attending PVCC

17. Did your degree from PVCC help you obtain your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Has your degree helped you obtain a promotion in your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Did you participate in PVCC's Co-op program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Did you receive career placement assistance from PVCC in obtaining your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21. If yes, please rate the quality of career placement assistance you received from each of the following sources:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
Academic program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Career services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Co-op program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. What is your annual salary? _____

23. What would you estimate your annual salary to be if you had not attended PVCC? _____

Section IV: Comments & Suggestions

In the space provided, please express comments or suggestions concerning any aspect of your PVCC experience. We are particularly interested in how we can improve our curriculum and services. Thank you for your participation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B: Graduate Comments

In the field of Horticulture only a Certificate is awarded. I believe it would be advantageous if PVCC would award an AA degree. I also would like to see this area (Charlottesville) expand in its Horticultural degrees program.

I would suggest that you continue to grow the honors program more. I only took one honors class: honors public speaking. I found it to be one of my best classes and I would like to see other honors classes available more often. Also, as a fine arts major I had an interest in graphic design but found that no graphic arts class was ever offered while I was a student. I know one is in the student handbook and that progress is being made towards offering graphic arts classes. As this is a major field of art with many job opportunities, I would strongly recommend that you grow this part of your art program. I knew many Piedmont students who plan to major in graphic design. I look forward to PVCC's future!

I'm satisfied with my PVCC experience and with the curriculum and services provided by PVCC. I can't think of an area that needs improvement.

[Instructor] is the best. He makes learning fun. [Instructor] is a fabulous teacher. [Instructor] is tough and so good at teaching that I actually loved writing. Your curriculum would be a thousand times more wonderful if your students weren't always in fear that their chosen program will be done away with. It was disconcerting and not good for morale.

They're a lot of benefits to attending a community college – less expensive, more personalized attention for students and a better quality experience of learning. PVCC is a great place for an education and I think has better prepared me for JMU. Some of my best teachers were at PVCC.

I was employed at a Marim Interior Company for 10 mos. prior to graduation. Due to childcare problems I was forced to quit.

The registration and cashier's office should be closer together.

The bookstore needs to be larger and have more staff to assist you.

Provide more evening classes (variety).

Provide activities in the evening.

The instructors at Piedmont are very, very good. I learned a lot from going to Piedmont both educationally and spiritually. Keep up the good job!

The college community, including instructors and fellow students, has been very kind and understanding. I have a disability but the educational process has certainly enriched my life.

Being a student at UVA now makes me fully appreciate the small classes and the wonderful instructors at PVCC. UVA may be a large big-name University, but the student/instructor interactions at PVCC seem to be (so far, anyway) much better and much more helpful than at UVA. Thanks for the great start.

The PVCC nursing program is excellent. In general, PVCC is very accommodating and attuned to other students – helps to balance life experiences and learning new skills – I was/am very pleased.

I enjoy being able to learn specific areas of Computer Studies that enhance my occupation. The Net+ and MCSE centered studies will continue my job advancement.

PVCC has provided absolutely no help in leading, guiding or helping me to find employment. I was very surprised to find out PVCC doesn't care what happens to you once you're handed your diploma.

My Piedmont experience has been extremely rewarding. After a long delay due to responsibilities of a working mother, I have managed to reach my goal. Piedmont's flexible hours afforded me the opportunity to attend school on weekends and nights. Thanks to your wonderful staff!

I feel my PVCC degree (Mechanical Drafting) complements my Mechanical Engineering degree quite well. My PVCC coursework gave me a competitive edge in some of my later coursework at RHIT that impressed my instructors. The knowledge I sought to learn at PVCC was to make up for what I saw as a deficiency in Engineering curriculums around the country. I am proud of my PVCC experiences.

I will always hold a special place in my heart for PVCC especially the instructors that have enhanced my life.

I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent at PVCC. I recommend it to everyone whether pursuing a degree or taking a personal enrichment class.

Your school helps students prepare for entering a four-year university or college. I think the faculty is wonderful [names of three professors] and you should continue to hire professors/educators using the above-named faculty as a standard.

Some of the horticulture classes should have run longer than one semester. It would be great if PVCC could issue an AA in Horticulture.

Better (affordable) tuition for international students.

My degree was in Electronics Technology. Since [instructor] taught the majority of the classes in this area, I had a number of his courses. He is an excellent teacher. If you find any extra money in this time of budget cutbacks, you should pay him more. The best people can be lured away by salary increases, and he is one of your best assets.

The level of instruction I received at PVCC was superb. A large number of instructors I come in contact with showed genuine enthusiasm. The clinical aspect of the nursing program instilled confidence in my abilities to perform as a nurse.

– Please continue to offer summer classes at PVCC. I know many people that are interested in them, especially Spanish courses. I enjoyed my two and half years at PVCC greatly, especially the faculty. [Names of two instructors] especially.

I was very pleased with all aspects of my time at PVCC. The staff and faculty are very helpful and interested in the students doing well. I always had a very positive, energized feeling every time I walked through the door of the school. Thank you for a job well done.

I pursued my degree because I had already had some college and wanted to finish.

The guidance department provided little if any guidance. [Counselor] is the most knowledgeable person in the department. I would suggest that students directly contact the school of their choice instead of relying on PVCC. However, I think the faculty is exceptional and also the Learning Center.

I have decided to stay home and raise my new baby girl. I enjoyed attending PVCC when I was completing my courses. I was working full time and taking courses around my work. Fortunately, my job allowed me to attend PVCC during certain hours of the day. PVCC was a great experience for me and the staff were very helpful in fulfilling my diploma requirements. Maybe in upcoming years I will return to school to catch up on new technologies and updated computer skills. Thank your staff for making my PVCC experience a delight.

I am not a typical PVCC graduate. I was employed at my current job for many years before I received a college degree. I found my experience at PVCC to be very satisfying. My reason for obtaining a degree was for self-gratification not for job change/career. I would rate the quality of academic programs and faculty at PVCC to be excellent.

Advising could be improved. I was never assigned an advisor. I chose certain faculty to ask advice from, but I would have enjoyed having an assigned advisor. I would also have liked more programs aimed at choosing a career.

The classes I have taken at PVCC were for personal growth more than job advancement. I already hold a B.S. degree from MCV when I started. I seem to have an aptitude for financial analysis, but I am not looking for another stressful career! Thus I did not make full use of the services offered by PVCC. The only criticism – the Intermediate Accounting textbook was horrible!

I am already a college graduate and attended primarily to learn more about computers. I gained a great deal of useful information and acquired skills which have been valuable in purchasing and maintaining my computers/parts. I also developed skills which help me use my software more fully. I teach for a living and must have functioning equipment and be proficient with my software.

Have more classes offered for Saturdays; this would greatly benefit people who have full time jobs.

My PVCC experience was very positive. I'm not sure how a person can be prepared to leave the intimate environment of PVCC to the enormity of UVA. The get together with other PVCC transfers before I graduated in '99 was very helpful. I'm glad I chose to go to PVCC first; in fact, I could not have been accepted at UVA without proving myself at Piedmont first.

Suggestions – more computer labs and improve the library – or emphasis on how interlibrary loans is such a great system.

I think my overall experience at PVCC was a good one. I believe that I benefited from attending a community college because of the one-on-one attention I received. I had exceptional teachers whom I admired greatly. My suggestion would be to offer more career options for students and to have more extracurricular activities. Definitely broaden your athletic branch and have more opportunities for kids to meet and interact with each other.

The Criminal Justice Certificate Program was the perfect complement to my BA in Sociology. The courses all related to my job.

The availability of course offerings and times was very important to me as I was employed full time while attending PVCC. I only wish I could obtain a Bachelor's from PVCC.

Two instructors were very ill prepared and need major improvement in their teaching methods – [instructor] (Math dept) and [instructor] (Geography).

Two instructors deserve special recognition – [instructor] (Humanities/public speaking) and [instructor] (Art department).

While attending PVCC I didn't realize what a great institution it is. I believe the personal attention received by all instructors better prepared me to excel at JMU, helped me to ease into the larger classes I attend now. Every instructor I had at PVCC was always available and willing to provide extra help outside of the classroom. That's not commonality at JMU!

PVCC could better assist me with classes to help obtain an AADC coding certification and classes that would lead me to a BA in Health Care Administration.

Counseling and Advisement – I was sometimes misled by counseling. I registered for courses in inappropriate order on two occasions due to advice from counseling.

It's a great experience. I have learned a lot. The professors are great. I have made good friends. Thank you all for a great job.

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*I think improving relationships w/regional employers will help our students in job placement.

I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at Piedmont Virginia Community College and am impressed with the curriculum and services provided.

It is unfortunate that PVCC does not offer any courses pertaining to the field of archaeology or anthropology. Other than this particular fact, I feel I received a great education (challenging, motivating, and enlightening) at PVCC. I was very pleased with all the instructors I had and was motivated to study and do my best in all my courses.

My experience at PVCC has been wonderful. I am currently enrolled in the nursing program at PVCC.

I wish PVCC would emphasize more on its science program. My biology courses were not up to level with UVA 200 level biology courses.

It took me close to 15 years to get my degree because I was having to go part time. UVA started a BA degree program in the Arts, Info Tech. I talked with a counselor there and was very disappointed more of my credits didn't transfer so I'm thinking about pursuing a BA degree from Univ. Of Phoenix's long-distance (online) learning.

I enjoyed my learning experience at PVCC. It is a great place to start a college career and probably the best bargain in VA. Thank you all at PVCC.

Piedmont Virginia Community nursing program was a very challenging and rewarding program. The nursing staff helped prepare me in more words than I can express. I will be forever grateful.

PVCC enhanced my career and improved my chances to succeed in the business world and my current job.

Faculty in Nursing Dept – wonderful staff throughout. Facility fair/poor.

I went to college mostly for personal growth. It wasn't my intention to further my career. I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent taking classes at PVCC. I had some great instructors. My favorites were [three instructors]. They also taught my favorite classes – history, literature and western culture. The only problem I had was if an instructor cancelled a class. I had to drive from Madison to find out. Instructor should make an effort to contact students.

Like to see more courses so when you finish school you could obtain Journeyman card.

Everything was fine.

One of my problems at PVCC was scheduling classes. Some classes are offered only once a year, thus making things complicated if you discover this in the second year of a two-year program. As a management major, I spent many classes with [instructor], creating lists of problems at PVCC and possible solutions. See him, for I do not have adequate room to list them all. Don't get me wrong, I have loved every minute at PVCC. I just strongly believe that it can be an even better place when my sisters enroll in 2002.

I feel that PVCC did very little to prepare me for a 4 year college. I think the interaction between faculty and student is poor. There are too many students in each class. Teachers are not always available because so many are part-time employees. I'm glad that I got my 2-year degree from PVCC, but I would think twice if I had to do it again.

Previous employment I worked in the General Acct'g office and thoroughly enjoyed it. Since I did not wish to pursue a CPA, I found the Acct'g classes to be very difficult and moved quickly. More tutors need to be available.

The counseling/advising department could use improvement.

Enjoyed the Experience!

I found PVCC faculty and staff most helpful. They seemed to have the best interest of the student in mind and were ready to provide assistance @ all times.

I would have preferred more evening classes on the campus rather than Charlottesville.

I fall in a very "in between" on the Academic selection. I have already graduated PVCC – am applying to Tech – and am currently enrolled at PVCC P/T to get prepared for Tech. PVCC was great!! Better selection of Heavy Math.

I really enjoyed my time at PVCC and I think BRCC could take some pointers.

When I was assigned an advisor on my second semester I was unable to reach him. He was never in office on his office hours. The semester after that was the same so I asked for another advisor. Next semester I was self-advising.

Also the registration office works horribly. I could write all the problems we had there but I am just happy I don't have to deal with them anymore.

I would suggest that the current grading system be amended to include +/- designation (A-, B+, B-, etc.). Beyond that, I have few suggestions in regards to the college transfer program, which is excellent. Overall, a

greater course selection would be excellent; however the current course catalog is more than sufficient. I am very well satisfied and very proud of my education at PVCC. Please contact me if I can be of any service in the future.

I've very fine memories of two years nursing programs. The nursing faculty was dedicated to produce competent nurses and the local hospital employers were eager to hire new graduates from the PVCC nursing program, which proves its excellence.

Quality of faculty was excellent. The whole PVCC experience was instrumental in progressing in my career.

Offer more up-to-date computer classes/programming languages.

My experience at PVCC was wonderful. The advising center walked me through EXACTLY what I had to do to be accepted to UVA – from classes I needed to take, grades I needed to make, to guidance on the application process.

Thank you!

P. S. I miss many members of the faculty. I learned a lot and they helped me achieve!

Perhaps create a support group for working mothers that do attend college. I'm married and financially okay but it's still extremely difficult to raise children and go to college.

I enjoyed my time at PVCC. The classes were challenging and the teachers were great. The only thing about PVCC that I did not enjoy was the building itself. I hope there are plans for a facelift in the near future.

I was not very satisfied with the academic counseling at PVCC. I loved the courses I took and the teachers, but my advisor was little or no help at all and often I had to find other counselors. Most often she told me to take classes that were not relevant to my degree nor would transfer to where she knew I wanted to go – UVA.

I think PVCC understands what education is "really" about more than UVA does. I have so much "work" at UVA – I don't have time to "learn" very much. My experience at PVCC is the best educational experience I have ever had. I feel PVCC understands that education is life not preparation for life. Thank you!!

My PVCC experience was for personal knowledge, not for means of employment. I celebrated my 72nd birthday this month. I enjoyed all of the courses – the instruction, interaction with instructors and students, and the material covered. PVCC is a very comfortable environment for someone like me. Your instructors were all top rated.

Very good experience. I am considering taking specialized classes to continue my education.

Piedmont is a great school. The staff's by far the best part. Especially [instructor]!! I didn't go both years there so my information is based on a short period of time.

Your full-time faculty members are excellent, and many of the part-time faculty members are good; however, I was not favorably impressed with the counseling and financial aid staff.

The single exception to the overall excellence of your courses is the "certification" courses in the IST dept. The latter are of poor quality and do not belong in an accredited institution – note, however, that the regular IST courses are of quite reasonable quality.

Some of the classes for one-year certificate are only offered during the day.